

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEATH WITH DIGNITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, we know that Attorney General Ashcroft is very busy. His Department is attempting to track down the perpetrators of the anthrax attacks on our citizenry. And there are more than 1,000 Federal detainees who need to be interrogated and investigated for possible links to terrorism. There are other possible terrorist cells he tells us that are at work in the United States to be exposed and uprooted. He has recently warned us of other potential impending attacks.

He is a very, very busy gentleman, obviously. But unfortunately not busy enough to keep him from making mischief. Today he took a day off from the war against terrorism in a detour to launch his own attack on the people of the State of Oregon.

Oregon twice passed a law to provide death with dignity, assisted suicide. We built in extraordinary protections. People had to have a terminal diagnosis within 6 months. It had to be confirmed by more than one physician. They had to undergo psychological evaluation. No one could administer the prescription to them, but a physician could provide it if they so chose.

He sees this as an assault on the American people and feels that it takes priority, I guess, even in these busy times for him, to undo. And unfortunately, the mischief of the work he is doing here goes far beyond the State of Oregon. Because what he is doing will chill the aggressive management of pain for people with terminal illnesses across the United States.

This is an area in which we have made a little bit of progress in the last quarter of a century. It is no longer considered that someone has to die in extraordinary pain. More and more physicians will treat that aggressively, even at the risk of potentially shortening someone's life by a tiny bit just to make them more comfortable.

But because of this decision and this action by Attorney General Ashcroft, that is not going to happen anymore. Because physicians across America and most assuredly in Oregon are going to have to worry that the Drug Enforcement Administration using the Controlled Substances Act, people totally unqualified in the practice of medicine, are going to be looking over their shoulder and wanting to know what was their intent in writing that prescription.

Now, Mr. Ashcroft rather innocently says in his memorandum here that they will just probably prosecute people by looking for the required paperwork in the State of Oregon, but he

does not limit the lengthy opinion here to that extent. There is lots more mischief to be done by this zealotry.

Thirty people last year in Oregon, 30 people chose to use the Death With Dignity Act by their own hand, humanely ending their lives just a bit early to avoid horrible suffering. Now, what is wrong with that? What is so dangerous about that that the Attorney General has to take a full day off from the war on terrorism and divert some of his staff from the war on terrorism to an attack on the initiative of the State of Oregon, of the people of Oregon, and the idea of death with dignity?

This is extraordinary to me. And doing it by manipulating the Controlled Substances Act and injecting the Drug Enforcement Administration into these extraordinarily sensitive end-of-life decisions which should involve an individual, their loved ones, their minister, pastor, priest, rabbi, a counselor, psychologist, friends. But why does the Drug Enforcement Administration have to be in that room? Why should they be involved and intervene in this sort of decision? They have no qualifications. They have no right. They have no place. Leave the people of Oregon alone.

In fact, I would suggest that perhaps Attorney General Ashcroft would want to focus his efforts on defending the people of Oregon and the people of the United States against all unwarranted attacks and also protect our civil liberties and our states right at the same time, which he is certainly not doing with this decision.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STUPAK addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

GREATER AIRLINE SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, we must pass as soon as possible an aviation security bill. It has been over 6 weeks since we passed the bail-out bill for the airline industry. I said at the time that I could not vote for that bill, not because it was a bad bill, but because it did not do anything to protect laid-off workers in the aviation community. And it did nothing to upgrade security in this country.

Today we still have that problem. People are still not willing to get back into planes to any great degree.

□ 2015

Just this past Saturday at O'Hare, we had another incident that shows that we have to change security in this country. An individual carrying a stun

gun, a can of Mace, and several knives in his carry-on luggage bag passed through screening at the airport without anyone stopping him whatsoever. That was after he had actually shown them two knives that he was carrying on the plane. This did not alert them whatsoever. They let him proceed right through that security point.

He was stopped at the gate. He was stopped by a United Airlines employee who had been informed by some other United employees that he had purchased a one-way ticket with cash. That United person at the gate stopped him, went through his bag, did find the Mace, did find the stun gun, did find the other knives. He was taken into custody by the Chicago Police Department. He was turned over to the FBI. He was then released by the FBI. By that time, though, he missed his flight to Omaha, a flight that he had put checked luggage on that wound up going to Omaha. After all of this, no one thought to remove his bag from the plane that went to Omaha.

This shows that we have to get rid of the status quo. We have to start with something brand new as far as aviation security. That is why we have to pass a bill as quickly as we possibly can. Thanksgiving is the greatest travel day we have in this Nation. We must have a new security bill in place before that so the American flying public will feel secure.

There were eight screeners that the FBI said were fired at O'Hare Airport because of this incident. Argenbright, the security company, simply said that they were suspended. Of those eight individuals, three of them have criminal records. One of them is a known member of a gang. That is why we must change the status quo in aviation security as quickly as possible.

Since September 11, the aviation industry has contracted to a very, very significant degree. At Newark, Reagan National, and Houston, flights are down by 35 percent; at Kennedy, 34 percent; Seattle, Boston, LaGuardia, Portland, and San Francisco, they are all down by over 25 percent. The Nation's top 31 airports are all down a minimum of 18 percent. Since September 11, United Airlines and American Airlines have cut 22 percent of their flights; Northwest, 15 percent; U.S. Airways, 25 percent; Delta, 15 percent; Alaskan Airlines, 26 percent; and Continental, 44 percent.

We are never going to get this economy going until we pass an upgraded aviation security bill, and we must pass that as quickly as possible. The House has named their conferees, the House has made a motion to instruct those conferees to go to conference, and we are waiting for the Senate. The Senate must move as quickly as possible and join the House in conference so we can work out a bill to protect all the American flying public by the end of this week, so people will know the skies are safe when they are flying at Thanksgiving.